



**For Immediate Release
August 2, 2006**

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**STATE ANNOUNCES \$5 MILLION IN IMPROVEMENTS
FOR HORSENECK BEACH STATE RESERVATION**

WESTPORT—Today, Stephen H. Burrington, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) joined Representative Michael J. Rodrigues in announcing plans for \$5 million in improvements for Horseneck Beach State Reservation.

“This is a major upgrade for one of DCR’s most important ocean beach facilities,” said Commissioner Burrington. “These improvements will modernize an aging facility built in the 1950s making it more enjoyable and accessible for visitors and more environmentally friendly. The renovations will help us to better meet the challenge of providing active public recreation in a sensitive coastal habitat.”

“I join my colleagues in the delightful news that better days are here for the Horseneck Beach State Reservation,” said Representative Michael J. Rodrigues. “I am gratified to see that these long-awaited improvements are beginning, improvements which will better serve the hundreds of thousands of citizens who visit our beach each year. I will continue to work with my colleagues in the Legislature to ensure Horseneck Beach remains a treasure of the Commonwealth.”

“These capital improvements will go a long way in preserving and enhancing Horseneck Beach, one of the great gems of the south coast,” said State Senator Joan M. Menard.

Established as a state park in 1957, 10,000-foot Horseneck Beach is one of the most popular public swimming beaches in Massachusetts. Composed of shifting sands, barrier dunes, and buffering salt marshes, the beach is also important from an environmental standpoint.

Two new bathhouse buildings (one each in the East and West parking lots) will replace the single existing Comfort Station in the Central Plaza area, increasing the number of toilets overall and spreading them out along the beach. Bathhouses will feature new sand rinse

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stations that replace indoor showers, and will incorporate composting toilets, which together are expected to reduce water use at the facility by at least 50%.

Replacing the current administration building will also improve the park staff's ability to manage the reservation. The new Beach Services Building will house a modern, more efficient park administration headquarters area, lifeguard facilities, a first aid station and additional public restrooms.

The new bathhouses and Beach Services Building will be raised to allow for sand migration, which will improve the health of the beach's dunes. Lighting, ventilation, building materials, and waste disposal systems are all designed with conservation in mind.

New dune crossing boardwalks will make for easier beach access, as well as reducing erosion and allowing the beach to self-nourish. Boardwalks will also protect flora and fauna in the dune area, such as the population of endangered piping plovers which nest at the state reservation.

The entire beach area will be more accessible to visitors: all buildings and boardwalks will be universally accessible in accordance with ADA standards. The new design increases the handicapped parking area and drop-offs, also placing them closer to the beach and more central to park facilities.

In addition, DCR plans to replace a significant amount of pavement area with pedestrian amenities such as pathways, shade structures and plantings in the vicinity of the new bathhouses.

Design work for the capital improvements was done by Stephen Kelleher Architects and Weston & Sampson Engineers. DCR will be going out to bid for a project contractor in the near future.

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